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ABSTRACT

This book discusses activities in dramatic arts for students with disabilities in a variety of settings, as well as guidelines for mainstreaming such students into regular theater activities. An introductory chapter describes the program for individuals with disabilities offered by the Bethesda (Maryland) Academy of Performing Arts. Chapter 1 considers the need for the arts by all people and Chapter 2 looks at the arts and disability, with emphasis on the use of the arts to develop listening skills, eye contact, body awareness, physical coordination, facial and verbal expressiveness, focus and concentration, flexibility and problem solving skills, social interaction, and self esteem. The next two chapters offer guidance for working with students having either physical disabilities or cognitive disabilities. Chapter 5 presents basic adaptations for the drama classroom such as use of classroom space, teaching personnel, and behavior management. Further adaptations for creative drama and improvisational acting classes are suggested in the sixth chapter. Next, specific lesson plans and activities are offered, followed by a chapter on the use of puppetry. Chapter 9 considers the development of original scripts and chapter 10 the use of drama as a teaching tool in the classroom. Techniques for mainstreaming are explained in the last chapter. Appendices include: (1) an annotated bibliography of 100 items, (2) a list of national organizations with information on disability and on theater and disability, and (3) a checklist for evaluating building accessibility. (DB)

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